

CIA Exploits Red Defector To Bare Perils Of Soviet Espionage In U.S.

By Thomas B. Ross
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WASHINGTON — Exploiting a prize Russian defector, the Central Intelligence Agency has embarked on an unusual plan to expose the dangers of Soviet espionage.

Normally the most secretive arm of the government, the CIA has decided to make public some of the revelations of Yevgeny Y. Runge, a 39-year-old Russian intelligence officer who defected in West Germany last month.

The principal purpose is to sound a note of caution to those citizens and officials who, the CIA believes, are engaged in wishful thinking about the possibility of a peaceful accommodation with the Soviet Union.

Massive Spy Drive

Runge's disclosures are being advanced as proof that the Russians are conducting a massive campaign of espionage against the United States and its allies.

The CIA is asserting, in connection with the Runge case, that:

1 "Hundreds" of agents such as Runge are spying in the United States and other Western countries and that the network is being expanded.

2 The KGB, the Soviet intelligence organization, employs 600,000 to 1,000,000 persons at home and abroad, but only 10,000 of them are engaged in foreign intelligence. The rest are involved in internal security, border patrol and the guarding of Russian leaders.

3 The Russians rely upon Soviet and satellite citizens for their spies, whereas the United States recruits natives of Eastern Europe and Russia for its agents.

His Own Story

Runge was, in CIA parlance, an "illegal," that is a spy who slips into another country and operates under an assumed name and nationality. He reportedly told the CIA this story:

He was born in the Ukraine in 1928 of parents of German extraction. During World War II, the Nazi invaders sent him to Germany to work.

After the war he became a Red Army interpreter and then joined Soviet intelligence in 1949. He received intensive training as an "illegal" from 1952 to 1955.

He was given the assumed name Willi Kurt Gast and the assumed birthplace of Duninowo, a town in the border area that shifted from German to

Polish control after the war. Runge spent two weeks there in 1954 familiarizing himself with his assumed background.

Married In 1956

In 1956 he married Walentina Rusch, an East German working for Soviet intelligence, and together they slipped into West Germany. There, they operated first a dry-cleaning establishment and later a vending-machine business in Cologne as cover for their espionage activities.

Runge recruited two principal agents: Leopold Pleschel,

a key official in the French Embassy in Bonn, and Heinz Sutterlin, an East German who successfully carried out orders to marry a secretary in the German Foreign Ministry.

In 1960 Runge moved to Frankfurt, opened a tavern, had a son and established himself as a solid family man. He rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel in the KGB with a monthly salary of \$420.

The money was credited to his account in Moscow and the

Runge lived in Germany on their business earnings.

Runge operated effectively as a Soviet spy until last summer, when he and his family went to the Soviet Union for a vacation at an intelligence officers' retreat on the Black Sea.

Runge was called to Moscow, awarded a medal, informed that he was to learn English — possibly for assignment in the United States —

and that he and his wife were to leave their son behind on their next mission.

Decides To Defect

Disenchanted with the wearying life of a spy, annoyed with the KGB's bureaucracy, attracted by life in the West and, most of all unwilling to separate from his sons, Runge decided to defect.

He convinced Yuri V. Andropov, head of the KGB, that too much suspicion would be aroused if he did not return from his vacation and so he

was allowed to go back to West Germany.

He managed to photograph his personnel file before departing in order to prove his identity to the CIA.

Whisked To U.S.

Last month Runge carried out his plan of defection and

was immediately whisked to the United States. He was ensconced with his family in a CIA "safe" house and has spent the ensuing days under constant interrogation.

His information has led to the arrest or surveillance of 20 other agents and there are

intimations that he may also point the way to spies in the United States.

He still is talking and undoubtedly will provide even more details for the campaign to restrain those the CIA thinks are too rapidly "building bridges" to the Soviet Union.

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